



Better Nights, Better Days

Pediatric Sleep Team Newsletter

Winter 2014

Welcome to the 2nd edition of
the BNBD newsletter



We hope this newsletter keeps our advisory boards and collaborators up to date on our progress on the Better Nights, Better Days (BNBD) CIHR TEAM Grant.



Our BNBD Pediatric Sleep team was awarded almost \$2,000,000 to develop, implement, evaluate and disseminate a web-based sleep intervention for children ages 1-10 years. Since the last newsletter update, we've made some exciting progress related to session and website development.

BNBD—The facts!

- Up to 25% of children suffer from difficulties falling asleep, staying asleep and waking early, referred to as “behavioural insomnia”. Behavioural insomnia can result in daytime sleepiness and can negatively affect behaviour, mood and school performance, and can also have negative effects on parents’ sleep and daytime functioning.
- Few children receive appropriate treatment, with about 1% of children with behavioural insomnia being treated with the behavioural approaches that have been shown to work.
- The main reasons for this scarcity of treatment are:
 - General lack of knowledge about what the right treatments are
 - Many health care providers do not have the training with these specific treatments
 - These treatments are not readily available particularly in areas without sleep centres
- The BNBD Pediatric Sleep Team is addressing these barriers by developing, putting in place, and testing the usefulness of a sleep treatment program for children aged 1-10 years with behavioural insomnia, which will be delivered over the internet. This will make the treatment program available to the majority of parents whose children have behavioural insomnia.
- Our goals are three fold:
 - To test whether parents make good use of this program and whether it is effective in improving children’s sleep
 - To study whether improved sleep results in better daytime functioning for children and for their parents
 - To provide information to health care providers on how to use this treatment program
- The proposed research program will address an important public health issue by creating new knowledge that results in a better way of delivering health care for children with behavioural insomnia, thereby improving the health and well-being of Canadian children

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The BNBD Management Team

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[Christine Chambers, PhD, RPsych](#)

Co-Investigator, Co-Lead of Training Committee

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Co-Investigator, Lead of London Implementation Site

[Robyn Strempler, RN, PhD](#)

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[Shelly Weiss, MD, FRCPC](#)

Co-Investigator, Co-Lead of Training Committee

[Manisha Witmans, MD FRCPC](#)

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[Aimee Coulombe, PhD](#)

Research Associate, Halifax Implementation Site

[Meredith Bessey, BSc](#)

Research Administrator, Halifax Implementation Site

Missing from photo: Dr.

Christine
Chambers



Back (left to right): Dr. Graham Reid, Dr. Reut Gruber, Dr. Wendy Hall, Dr. Penny Corkum.

Front (left to right): Dr. Robyn Strempler, Dr. Roger Godbout, Dr. Manisha Witmans, Dr. Shelly Weiss

BNBD Logo and Branding



The BNBD team has been working closely with Headspace (our web company) to develop a true brand for Better Nights Better Days. True branding is about the promise of an experience. What is the experience that we want parents and children to have with the BNBD intervention? The team participated in intensive meetings, surveys and questionnaires that asked questions such as "If you had to design a



billboard for Better Nights, Better Days, what three words would appear?" or "What evocative place does it feel like?" After the team answered these questions and provided the branding specialist with enough information, our brand code was born. **Hands** is the brand code for BNBD. The brand of "hands" can represent many things that we want the BNBD program to embody: comfort, family unity, reassurance, guidance, support, participation and accomplishment. You will notice the idea of hands coming through the BNBD logo - the cloud shape is supportive, and the image appears to be hand-drawn. An image of hands won't appear in the

intervention; it's more a feeling that is invoked. Now that we have a brand established for BNBD, the work isn't over. We have to continue to create an expectation based on our brand, defend our brand, and know our audience. It's also important to remember that we cannot control our brand—in the end, it will be interpreted by the participants and shaped by the experience they have with the intervention.



BNBD Trainee Program



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BNBD Trainee Program

The BNBD trainee program provides comprehensive learning and funding opportunities to inter-disciplinary pediatric sleep trainees, building research and clinical capacity for pediatric sleep in Canada. Learning is heightened by timely and flexible access to live and recorded presentations online, opportunities to present research at academic conferences, collaborations and discussions with peers and mentors, and interactions with other trainees from across the country. In its first year, 14 trainees from 2 disciplines (psychology and nursing) and 4 provinces (BC, ON,

QE, NS) participated in the BNBD Trainee Program. Online presentations covered topics such as: infant and toddler sleep; sleep, cognitive functioning, and mental health; access to sleep interventions; and sleep interventions for hospitalized children. Four trainees have received financial support; two travel grants, and one summer studentship were awarded, in addition to funding a full-time post-doctoral fellow.

On October 7, 2013, we hosted our first BNBD Trainee institute. This event was held in conjunction with the Canadian

Sleep Society biennial conference in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The full day institute covered topics such as grantsmanship, getting research published, intellectual property, life as an academic and knowledge translation. The event was a great success!

You are welcome to become a trainee if you are supervised by a BNBD team member; otherwise, the trainee affiliate program may be right for you. Please contact Meredith Bessey at meredith.bessey@dal.ca for more information, or to apply.

Trainee Projects

Core Competencies for Health Professionals: Training in Pediatric Sleep

Behavioural sleep problems are highly prevalent among young and school-aged children. Many children with behavioural sleep problems could be treated in a primary care setting or by health professionals already involved in their health or mental health care, however, few children are currently receiving evidence-based behavioural sleep care. Katelynn's project sought to identify what is getting in the way of health professionals providing this evidence-based care to families, and for those health professionals who *are* able to provide evidence-based care, what factors are facilitating their practice. To examine this issue, 124 Canadian health professionals answered open-ended questions regarding barriers and facilitators of their provision of evidence-based behavioural sleep-related care. Their responses represented issues at an individual practice level, as well as broader systemic issues. The most frequently reported barrier and facilitator related to knowledge, training, and education.

Other barriers included lack of time and institutional support, and facilitators included supportive sleep attitudes and beliefs.

Our first study clearly identified the need to train front-line health professionals in evidence-based pediatric behavioural sleep care, including the basics of sleep medicine and related behavior change methods. However, no curriculum for achieving this goal currently exists. Further, the training that does exist in current programs for health professionals is often sparse, may be discipline-specific, and can vary across programs within those disciplines. As such, we developed a common core competency list that would be applicable for training across health professions and that would capture the scope of skills and knowledge required by health professionals to treat childhood behavioural sleep problems. To achieve this goal, we used a modified Delphi process (which included several rounds of surveys to a group of 46 international pediatric sleep experts) to achieve consensus on a core competency list. The final core competency list captured areas relevant to the identification and treatment of behavioural sleep problems by health professionals working outside of sleep-specialty

settings. The final list included six core competency areas (The basics of sleep; Causes of sleep problems; Outcomes of inadequate sleep; Assessment and screening; Behavioural interventions; Supporting parents) as well as numerous subtopics within each core competency area. We propose that this core competency list could be used to ensure comprehensive training for health professionals in all areas necessary to treat pediatric behavioural sleep problems, thus increasing access to care for families. You can read more about this here: Boerner, K.E.*, Coulombe, J.A.,*, Corkum, P. (Accepted, August 2013) Barriers and facilitators of evidence-based practice in pediatric behavioural sleep care: Qualitative analysis of the perspectives of health professionals. *Behavioral Sleep Medicine*.



Usability Study

Before the BNBD web-based intervention is ready for evaluation by a randomized controlled trial (RCT), a usability study is necessary to ensure that the program is user-friendly, promotes sustained participation, and results in user satisfaction. This study occurred in five waves, with each wave gathering feedback on each of the five sessions of the intervention. Participants' feedback will be used to amend various aspects of the intervention including content and visual appearance. Research questions for the study revolved around 6 key dimensions of usability: useful, usable/findable, desirable, valuable, accessible, and credible. Research questions also focused on participants' evaluation of the key features of the website, videos, activities, readiness of the intervention for use with parents, and overall satisfaction. Participants for this study included members of the BNBD Management Team, BNBD scientific and clinical advisors, 21 health professionals, as well as 25 parents. The usability study began in September and is being led by Dr. Corkum's PhD student, Tamara Speth. The study is in its final stages now.



Pediatric Sleep: Practice Barriers and Facilitators

As mentioned in the grant overview, although a large proportion of children have sleep problems, many of them do not receive the appropriate course of treatment. We were interested in exploring the question of what the barriers and facilitators to treatment for behavioural insomnia are. Health professionals (social workers, family physicians, psychologists, psychiatrists, nurses, and pediatricians) were surveyed using an Internet based survey program. They were asked to answer questions about their sleep-related training, practice, knowledge, attitudes and beliefs, responsibility, and readiness to change. Based on this data, two undergraduate students, Erin Maguire and Melissa Howlett, have completed projects. Erin's findings have been presented at the Canadian Psychology Association conference in June 2012 and Dalhousie's Psychiatry Research Day in November 2012, and Melissa's findings were presented at Dalhousie Pediatrics Research Day in April 2013 and the APSS conference in Baltimore in June 2013. Currently, we are working on developing resources for health professionals. Keep an eye out for an upcoming publication of the results of this study: Boerner, K.E.*, Coulombe, J.A.*, Corkum, P. (Submitted June 02, 2013 – disposition: Revise and Resubmit). Core competencies for health professionals' training in pediatric behavioral sleep care: A Delphi study. *Behavioral Sleep Medicine*.



Meetings and conferences since our last update

The Management team has been meeting bi-weekly via telephone conferences. In addition to this, the team held their second face-to-face meeting during the APSS Conference in Boston, Massachusetts in June 2012. The team has also been busy presenting the BNBD work at various conferences and professional meetings. To keep costs low, Management Team members present on Better Nights, Better Days in the city where they are based. This gives the team excellent representation throughout Canada! To date, BNBD has been presented during APSS 2012 in Boston, the Connaught Global Challenge in Toronto (Sept, 2012), Dalhousie Psychiatry research Day (Nov. 2012), the International Pediatric Sleep Association in Manchester, U.K. (Dec. 2012), the Canadian Association of Cognitive and Behavioural Therapies Association in Montreal (May 2013), the International Society for Research on Internet

Interventions in Chicago (May, 2013), the Canadian Sleep Society Conference in Halifax (October 2013), the Canadian Association of Pediatric Health Centres Conference in Toronto (October 2013), and the Pediatric Sleep Medicine Conference in Amelia Island, Florida (November 2013). In December 2012, several members of the BNBD Management Team travelled to Manchester, UK to present a symposium entitled *Canadian Perspective on novel ways of treating childhood behavioural insomnia: Outcomes of four behavioral interventions studies that are informing the development of a national web-based treatment study*. To coincide with the Canadian Sleep Society Conference scheduled from October 4–6, 2013, we held another annual

face-to-face Management Team meeting in Halifax. The team had a great meeting, and many important decisions were made to move the project ahead.



Management Team Members at IPSA (from left): Dr. Aimee Coulombe, Dr. Penny Corkum, Dr. Roger Godbout, Dr. Wendy Hall, Dr. Graham Reid

Intervention

Session Development

All five sessions have been written and Headspace has been working hard creating a beta version of our web-based application. Each session consists of information presented to parents in mainly video format, as well as limited information presented in written format, along with activities for parents to complete as they work through the session. At the end of each session, parents receive personalized feedback and session plans to use when implementing the information with their child.

In the summer of 2013, Troy Power, recent graduate of the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) Radio and Television Arts Program, and Trish Roberts, a student in the NSCC Graphic Design Program, joined our Halifax based team. Troy and Trish, along with Charlotte Butcher, Mick Smith, and Martin Noel (who all joined our team in the fall of 2013, have been working hard to create videos that will bring this intervention to life! There are five sessions in total, which build on each other and allow parents to work on implementing long-lasting behavioural changes. The sessions are as follows:

1. Principles of behavioural sleep problems and behaviour change
2. The ABCs of SLEEPING (sleep hygiene and sleep promoting behaviours)
3. Settling to sleep at bedtime
4. Going back to sleep (naps, night wakings and early mornings wakings)
5. Looking ahead (other sleep problems and relapse prevention)

The sessions are now in a useable, web-based format and are currently undergoing revisions, based on feedback from the usability study (see page 5). We anticipate a full version of the application will be ready in early May 2014.



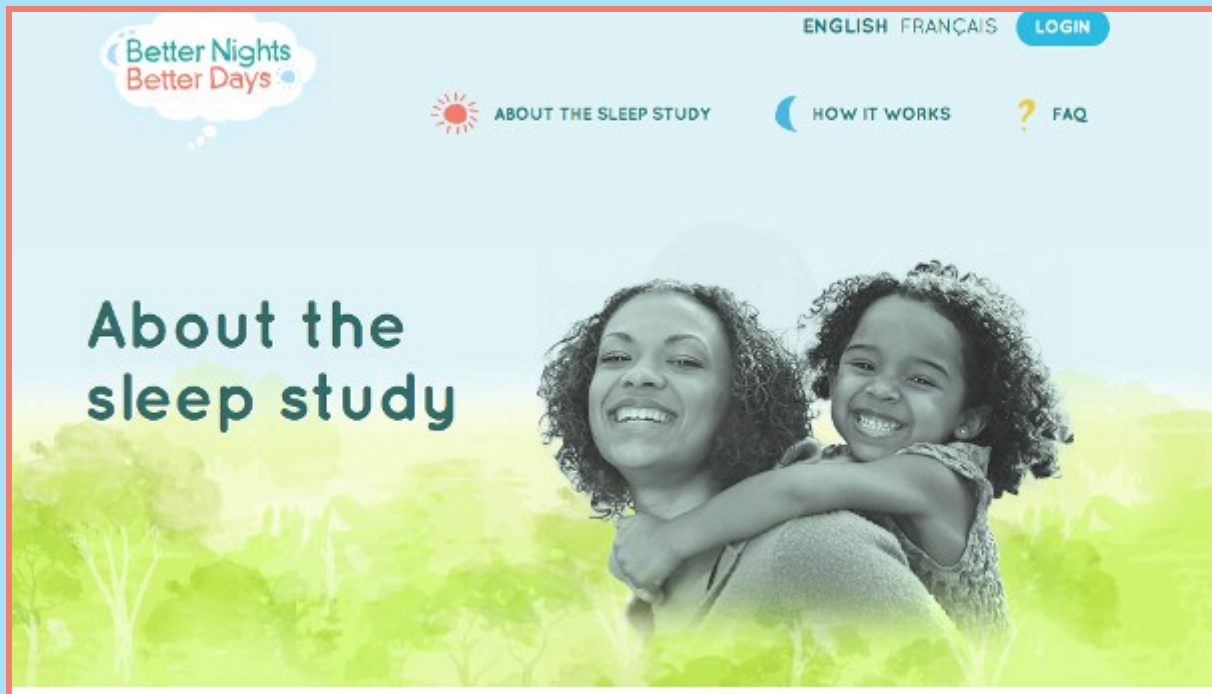
Troy Power



Trish Roberts



Website



The Better Nights, Better Days website is looking great! Parents can see information about the sleep study, how the sleep intervention works and read about each of the team members. Please visit www.betternightsbetterdays.ca to see more!

Progress Timeline



Finalized Annual Report to CIHR

March 2012

Management team held a face to face meeting in Boston, Mass

BNBD Development Poster presented at APSS 2012 in Boston, Mass

June 2012

First Technical Specifications meeting

Reporting and Advisory Session in Boston, Mass., with CIHR, ICRH and the 3 other teams in the Sleep and Circadian Rhythms

Members of the management team present a symposium at the IPSA

December 2012

Ongoing intervention session development

June, 2013

Hired Troy Power (producer) and Trish Roberts (illustrator) to work with Dalhousie and Headspace on video production

July 1, 2013

Launch of website for BNBD www.betternightsbetterdays.ca

August, 2013

September 2013

Usability study began (see page 5)

October 2013

Management team presented a symposium and a poster at the CSS conference in Halifax, NS

Management team held a face to face meeting in Halifax, NS

January 2014

Usability study ended

Projected start date for BNBD pilot

May 2014

September 2014

Projected start date for BNBD RCT

Proposed date for launch of CAPHC webinars

Funding

Support and funding provided by the Canadian Institutes for Health Research:

- Institute for Circulatory and Respiratory Health
- Institute for Human Development, Child & Youth Health
- Institute for Neurosciences, Mental Health and Addiction



Upcoming Events

SLEEP 2014, Minneapolis, Minnesota, May 31-
June 4, 2014

Questions? Contact Us

If you have questions or comments related to the Better Nights, Better Days Pediatric Sleep Team Grant, please feel free to contact the Research Coordinator Meredith Bessey at (p) 902-494-5177, meredith.bessey@dal.ca, or the Principal Investigator, Dr. Penny Corkum at penny.corkum@dal.ca.



Find BNBD on the web!

www.betternightsbetterdays.ca

